

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:06 a.m., May 20, 2008]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on May 21.

**Message to the Congress on
Continuation of the National
Emergency With Respect to the
Stabilization of Iraq**

May 20, 2008

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication. This notice states that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13303 of May 22, 2003, as modified in scope and relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13315 of August 28, 2003, Executive Order 13350 of July 29, 2004, Executive Order 13364 of November 29, 2004, and Executive Order 13438 of July 17, 2007, is to continue in effect beyond May 22, 2008.

Obstacles to the orderly reconstruction of Iraq, the restoration and maintenance of peace and security in the country, and the development of political, administrative, and economic institutions in Iraq continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Accordingly, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to this threat and maintain in force the measures taken in response to this threat.

George W. Bush

The White House,
May 20, 2008.

**Proclamation 8258—A Day of
Solidarity With the Cuban People,
2008**

May 20, 2008

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of worship are among the liberties that Americans cherish. Our Nation fully supports the brave people who work to secure these liberties in the countries where they are denied. And on this Day of Solidarity with the Cuban People, we focus our attention on the men and women working to secure freedom, democracy, and human rights for the citizens of Cuba.

For half a century, the Cuban people have suffered under oppressive dictatorship. Under the rule of Fidel and Raul Castro, Cubans have seen their political freedoms denied, their economy reduced to shambles, and their families torn apart. The Cuban people deserve better—and the American people stand with them as they work to achieve it.

The United States is rallying the free world to the cause of Cuban liberty. We continue to shine a bright light on the Castro regime's abuses—and America calls on the Government of Cuba to immediately and unconditionally release all prisoners of conscience.

We keep these prisoners, their families, and all Cubans in our prayers. Especially on this Day of Solidarity, we ask the Almighty to comfort and strengthen those who suffer under the Castro dictatorship—and to hasten the day when Cuba's suffering comes to an end.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 21, 2008, as A Day of Solidarity with the Cuban People to recognize those who are suffering in Cuba, especially Cuba's prisoners of conscience. I call upon the citizens of the United States to mark this observance with appropriate ceremonies and activities that demonstrate

America's resolute support for those living under the Castro regime.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 22, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 23. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this proclamation.

Remarks on the Situation in Cuba

May 21, 2008

Thank you all. *Bienvenidos*. Thanks for coming to mark this Day of Solidarity with the Cuban People. This is a day of pride, as we honor the culture and history of a noble nation. It's a day of sorrow, as we reflect on the continued oppression of the Cuban people. Most of all, this is a day of hope. We have hope because we see a day coming when Cubans will have the freedom of which they have dreamed for centuries, the freedom that is the eternal birthright of all mankind. And many of you here are working to hasten that day, and I thank you for your efforts.

I particularly thank the members of my Cabinet who've joined us. Madam Secretary, thank you for coming and being a staunch friend of the Cuban people. *Mi amigo* Carlos Gutierrez *y su familia*—for those of you in Cuba who are listening to this broadcast, I think it is important for you to know that Carlos is a Cuban American. He's now in the Cabinet of the President of the United States. All things are possible in a free society. Secretary Kempthorne, Secretary Chao, and Secretary Leavitt, thank you all for coming as well. I appreciate Acting Secretary Bernardi of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

I'm particularly thankful for Members of the United States Congress—Mel Martinez—all things are possible in a free society; Ileana Ros-Lehtinen; *los hermanos* Balart, Lincoln Diaz-Balart *y tambien* Mario Diaz-

Balart. Thank you for coming, Congressman Chris Smith, Congressman Darrell Issa, Congressman John Campbell, Congressman Gus Bilirakis, thank you all for coming. Appreciate you all coming.

I appreciate the members of the diplomatic corps who've joined us. Thank you for being such good friends of the Cuban people. I want to thank the family members of the Cuban dissidents who are here. Welcome to the White House. Thank you for coming. *Y por fin*, Willy Chirino and his wife, Lisette Alvarez, thank you all for coming.

This time of year holds great significance for the Cuban people. One hundred and thirteen years ago this week, Cuba lost its great poet and patriot Jose Marti. And 106 years ago this week, Cuba achieved the independence for which Marti gave his life. Jose Marti knew that true liberty would come to Cuba only with a just government of its people's choosing. He warned: "A regime of personal despotism would even be more shameful and more calamitous than the political despotism [Cuba] now endures."

Marti's warning proved truer than anyone could have imagined. Today, after nearly a half-century of repression, Cuba still suffers under the personal despotism of Fidel and Raul Castro. On the dictators' watch, Cuba's political freedoms have been denied. Families have been torn apart. The island's economy has been reduced to shambles. Cuba's culture has been drained of artists and scholars and musicians and athletes. And like the once grand buildings of Havana, Cuba's society is crumbling after decades of neglect under the Castros.

A few months ago, when Fidel handed over many of his titles to his brother Raul, the Cuban regime announced a series of so-called reforms. For example, Cubans are now allowed to purchase mobile phones and DVD players and computers. And they've been told that they will be able to purchase toasters and other basic appliances in 2010.

If the Cuban regime is serious about improving life for the Cuban people, it will take steps necessary to make these changes meaningful. Now that the Cuban people can be trusted with mobile phones, they should be trusted to speak freely in public. Now that the Cuban people are allowed to purchase DVD players, they should also be allowed